[The Ploughman and Shipman.]

CHAUCER'S PORTRAIT GALLERY.

THE PLOUGHMAN.

This industrious, simple hearted, and good man occupies but a small space in the text; the description is, like himself, simple and unobtrusive. The most interesting feature of his personal history is his connection with the "poure Parson," as that of his moral character is the benefit he appears to have thence derived. He is in spirit, as well as in blood, the Parson's

"brother,
That had ylaid of dung full many a fother.*
A trué swinker†, and a good was he;
Living in peace and perfect charity.
God loved he best, with alle his heart
At alle times, were it gain or smart,
And then his neighebour right as himselve.
He woulde thresh, and thereto dyke and delve,
For Christes sake, for every poure wight
Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.
His tithes payed he full fair and well,
Both of his proper swink‡ and his cattél.
In a tabárd he rode upon a mare."

The use of the word tabard, we may observe by the way, for a kind of sleeveless coat, or in short a smock-frock, is curious. Of the state of the class represented among the pilgrims by the Ploughman, during the middle ages, we possess but meagre information. It is evident from the text, that he is not a mere ploughman in the sense we now attach to the words, but a man who has "cattle," and from whom "tithe" is expected. He was most probably one of that large class of emancipated villains, who lived by renting a small piece of land, and eking out its produce by occasional labour for other and wealthier men. The rental of land at or about the period of Chaucer presents some curious features as to the prices and quantities of land concerned. We extract a few particulars from Sir John Cullum's 'History of Hawsted.' One rental in 1420 mentions eight acres of arable land let at 6*d.* an acre; another in 1421, thirty-eight acres at 9*d.* an acre; and a garden at the old rent of 10*s.* a year. From the same work we obtain an idea of the extent and nature of the produce of a piece of arable land in the manor of Hawsted, consisting of 157½ acres. This was cultivated in the proportion of fifty-seven acres of wheat and fifty-four and a half of oats, to twenty-four of barley and twenty-two of peas. The produce averaged somewhat less than eight bushels per acre. As to other matters, the land lying nearest to inhabited places was the best cultivated; the common pastures served as support for the 'cattle,' and the acorns and beech-mast of the woods for the hogs; whilst for their own living the labouring population relied little on luxuries and much on appetite, which no doubt was sufficiently sharpened by the continual labour they had to perform. During harvest, herrings, beer, and bread made of rye, barley, peas, and occasionally of beans,

* Or load. † Worker or labourer.
‡ That is to say, of the fruits of his *labour* as well as of *his cattle*.

formed the chief part of the provisions that graced the husbandman's table. Messes of pottage and cheese also were not wanting. In ancient valuations, both in towns and in rural districts, we find mention made of stores of corn possessed by the inhabitants. It was the neglect of this precaution, generally carried into effect immediately after harvest, and the consequent improvidence that ensued, that often produced famines. When wheat was sold at such low prices as to be within the reach of the poor, it was thought a great thing. This of course was only the case immediately after a very favourable harvest. In 'Piers Plowman' is recorded an instance of this kind, when even no beggar would "eat bread that in it beanes were." Implements at this period were simple, few in number, and inexpensive, for the user generally made them himself: an iron ploughshare, an axe, and a spade formed the only articles which he was accustomed to purchase. The plough was drawn by oxen, who were so badly fed, that six of them were required for that purpose, and, after all, scare half an acre was turned up as the result of a day's work. Such were some of the difficulties of husbandry in the older time; and to these circumstances we probably owe not only the simplicity, but the little prominence given by Chaucer to his Ploughman.

BLACK-LEAD AND BLACK-LEAD PENCILS.

A BLACK-LEAD pencil is one of that numerous class of familiar implements, the use of which is much better known than the manufacture, or even the materials.

Plumbago, the substance which we improperly call black-lead, is a carburet of iron, that is, a compound of carbon and iron, and is found in various situations, such as in the midst of mountains, in beds of quartz, and in masses of calcareous earth. It generally occurs in kidney-form pieces, varying in size from that of a pea upwards. When pure, a piece weighing ten ounces will contain about nine ounces of carbon and one ounce of iron; hence arises an incombustible character which admirably adapts this substance as a material for crucibles, in the making of which it is much employed. A mine of black-lead was discovered some years ago in North Carolina, in which the mineral occured in large solid lumps, which were collected, packed in the native state in barrels, and sold at eighteen or twenty shillings per cwt. It was used by the Americans in various forms; being ground with oil for painting the wooden roofs of their buildings, and being used in different ways as a preservative from decay, and also from fire, to which its incombustible character well fits it. Black-lead has been discovered at a considerable depth in one of the mountains of Ceylon; and more recently, a mine of the same substance has been discovered in Ayrshire in Scotland.

But by far the most celebrated black-lead mine is that in Borrowdale, Cumberland, six miles from Keswick. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, while some copper and lead mines were being worked in this district, the black-lead mine was accidentally discovered, by a disrupture occasioned by a hurricane. When the commercial value of this newly found substance became known, the proprietors found it very difficult to guard the mine from depredations; the practice of robbing it having at length become so common, that several persons living in the neighbourhood were said to have made large fortunes by secreting and selling the mineral. About a century ago, a body of miners broke into the mine by main force, and held possession of it for a considerable time, during which they abstracted an enormous quantity of the mineral, which they sold at a price so low, that the proprietor was induced to buy it up, in order to restore the old rate of prices.

These circumstances gave rise to such jealous caution on the part of the proprietors, that scarcely anything was known of the nature or mode of working the mine, until a few years ago, when Mr. Parkes, the chemist, having an opportunity to visit it during one of its periods of working, gave a minute account of the whole, from which we will borrow a few particulars.

The road from Keswick to the mine leads through some defiles which must be traversed either on foot or horseback, as no carriage can pass. The mine is in the midst of a mountain about two thousand feet high, which rises at an angle of about 45°; and as that part of the mine which is now being worked is near the middle of the mountain, the present entrance is about one thousand feet from the summit. The aperture by which the workmen enter descends by a flight of steps; and in order to guard the treasure contained within, the proprietors have erected a strong brick building of four rooms, one of which is immediately over the entrance into the mine. This opening is secured by a trap-door, and the room connected with it is called the dressing-room; for, when the men enter it, they strip off their usual clothes, and put on dresses suitable for mining. The men work in gangs, which relieve each other every six hours; and when the hour of relief comes, a steward or foreman attends in the dressing-room to see the men change their dress as they come up one by one out of the mine. The clothes are examined by the steward, to see that no black-lead is concealed in them; and when the men have dressed, they leave the mine, making room for another gang, who change their clothes, enter the mine, and are fastened in for six hours. In one of the four rooms of which the house consists there is a kind of counter or strong table, at which two men are employed in assorting and dressing the mineral. This is necessary, because it is usually divided into two qualities; the finest of which have generally pieces of iron-ore or other impurity attached to them, which must be dressed off. These men, who are strictly watched while at work, put the dressed black-lead into casks holding about one cwt. each, in which state it leaves the mine. The casks are conveyed down the side of the mountain in the following manner:—Each cask is fixed upon a light sledge with two wheels, and a man, who is well used to the precipitous path, walks down in front of the sledge, taking care that it does not acquire too great a momentum, and thus overpower him. When the cask has been thus guided safely to the bottom, the man carries the sledge up hill upon his shoulders, and prepares for another cask.

About the middle of the last century, the mine was opened only once in seven years; and a quantity, supposed to be equal to the demand for that space of time, was taken out at once. Subsequently, however, the demand being greater, and the quantity obtainable at any one time being smaller, it was found necessary to work the mine for six or seven weeks every year. During the time of working, the mine is guarded night and day; and when a quantity sufficient for one year has been taken out, the mine is secured thus:—There is, besides the opening at which the men enter, a large horizontal one capable of admitting hand-carts and wheelbarrows, for the removal of the rubbish and loose earth with which the black-lead is enveloped, and for the flow of water from the mine. All this rubbish is, at the completion of the working, wheeled back into the larger entrance, to the extent of several hundred cartloads, by which the water is dammed up, and the mine gradually flooded. All the doors are then locked, and the mine entirely deserted till the following year.

Several shafts have been worked in the mine, ac-

cording to the richness of the contents at any particular spot, and the expense of collection varies with the position of the shaft. But the outlay, from the following remark of Mr. Parkes, appears to be by no means heavy:—"The expenses in driving the level, building the house, and working the mine, from the 23rd of April, 1798, to the 4th of April, 1814, have amounted to 6637*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.*; and during this period there have been produced 736 casks of fine black-lead, and 1816 casks of the coarse kind, amounting together to 2552 casks, of about 112 lbs. each." The commercial transactions by which the black-lead passes into the hands of the pencil-makers, were thus described by Dr. Faraday, in one of his lectures a few years ago:—The mineral is exposed to sale at the black-lead market, which is held on the first Monday of every month at a house in Essex Street, Strand. The buyers, who amount to about seven or eight, examine every piece with a sharp instrument to ascertain its hardness; those which are too soft being rejected. The individual who has the first choice pays 45*s.* per pound; the others 30*s.* But as there is no addition made to the first quantity in the market, during the course of the year, the residual portions are examined over and over again, until they are exhausted. The average annual sale is said now to amount to about 3000*l.* per annum; but Mr. Parkes states that it was at one time as much as thirty or forty thousand pounds.

At what time the making of pencils from black-lead was first adopted is not clearly known; the first mention with which we are acquainted is in Sir John Pettus's 'Fleta Minor,' published in 1686; where, in speaking of black-lead, he says:—"Of late it is curiously formed into cases of deal or cedar, and so sold as dry pencils, something more useful than pen and ink." The mode of manufacture is simply as follows:—The cedar of which the cases are formed is sawed into long planks, and subsequently into smaller rods. Grooves are then cut out by means of a fly-wheel, of such a size as to receive the layer of black-lead. The pieces of the mineral are cut into thin slabs, and then into rods the same size as the grooves, into which they are inserted. The two halves of the case are then glued together, and the whole is turned into a cylindrical form by means of a gauge.

Dr. Ure has described the mode of making pencils in Paris, in which the marking ingredient has any desired degree of hardness given to it. Black-lead, being reduced to a fine powder, is mixed with very pure clay, also in the form of powder, then put into a crucible, and calcined at a heat approaching to whiteness. The proportion of clay employed is greater as the pencil is required to be harder; the average being equal parts of each ingredient. The ingredients are ground with a muller on a porphyry slab, and subsequently made into balls, which are preserved in a moist atmosphere in the form of paste. To give a pencil form to this paste, it is pressed into grooves cut in a smooth board, and another board, previously greased, is pressed down firmly upon them. When the paste has had time to dry, the mould or grooved board is put into a moderately heated oven, by which the paste, now in the form of square pencils, shrinks sufficiently to fall easily out of the grooves. In order to give solidity to the pencils, they are set upright in a crucible till it is filled with them, and then surrounded with charcoal powder, fine sand, or sifted ashes. The crucible, being covered, is exposed to a degree of heat proportionate to the hardness required in the pencils, the harder pencils requiring the higher degree of heat. Some of the pencils are shaped in a curious manner: models of the pencils, made of iron, are stuck upright upon an iron tray, having edges raised as high as the intended length of the pencils, and a metallic alloy, made of tin, lead, antimony, and bismuth, is poured into the sheet-iron tray. When the alloy has cooled, it is inverted and shaken off from the model-rods, so as to form a mass of metal perforated throughout with tubular cavities corresponding to the intended pencil-pieces. The pencil-paste is introduced by pressure into these cavities; and when nearly dry, the pieces shrink sufficiently to be easily removed from the cavities. It will be observed that the French pencils here spoken of are unprovided with wooden cases. Messrs. Couté and Humblot are said to have realized large fortunes by the manufacture and sale of these pencils.

Within the last few years black-lead has been used in a singular form as a material for pencils, viz. in the 'ever-pointed' pencil-case. This peculiar little instrument, patented by Mr. Mordan about twenty years ago, is a pencil-case provided with a slider, acted on by a screw for the purpose of projecting forward a little cylinder of black-lead. This cylinder is so small that the lead needs not cutting for the ordinary purposes of a pocket-pencil. The mineral is formed into these cylindrical rods by being first cut into thin slabs, then into square rods, and finally passed through holes in a steel plate armed with rubies for the sake of hardness The first of these holes is octagonal, by which the four-sided rod of mineral is converted into one of eight sides; the other two holes are for giving a cylindrical form to the pencil.

DOMESTIC WATER-FOWL.

[Concluded from page 387.]

In North America the Canada goose (*Anser Canadensis*) is very common in a state of domestication, and abundant as a wild bird, breeding in the arctic regions, and spreading southwards on the approach of winter. It is now to be classed among our domestic water-fowl, but is kept rather as an ornament to ponds and sheets of water than for the sake of its flesh. In America, however, the farmers regard it as nearly as good and profitable as the common domestic kind.

The Chinese goose (*Anser Cygnoïdes*) is more common in our country as a domestic bird than the Canada goose, and intermingles with the ordinary grey goose, which it exceeds in size, and especially in the swan-like length of the neck. It is a native of China and other parts of Asia, and is also said to occur in Africa. Buffon describes it as the "*Oie de Guinée*."

The common domestic duck, so much in request for the table, is descended from the wild duck, or mallard (*Anas Boschas*), one of the most beautiful of the tribe. The tame drake indeed often displays exquisite tints of glossy blue and green, and pencillings of the most delicate character; but great variation obtains, and we find individuals of a pure black, or a pure white, with every diversity between them.

The wild duck is spread over most of the temperate and colder regions of the globe, and is indigenous in England, although far less plentiful than formerly. In winter its numbers are increased by accessions from the colder regions, but these depart early in spring. The tame duck is polygamous, but the wild duck pairs, the pairing season being towards the end of February or very early in March. The female incubates in April or May; and at this juncture the male deserts her, leaving to her the care of the forthcoming brood. The males now associate in small flocks, and lose their brilliant plumes and curled up tail-feathers, and nearly resemble the female. With the autumnal moult they regain their distinctive colouring. The flesh of the wild duck is very excellent, and several modes have been resorted to for the capture of these birds in various countries. Of these the decoy is the most successful; and it is recorded that in one season, near Wainfleet, thirty-one thousand two hundred wild fowl

were taken in ten of these decoys, of which two-thirds were mallards. On the subject of capturing these birds we shall say nothing, as the reader will find ample details in the 'Penny Magazine' for 1837, pp. 49 and 60.

In China the eggs of the tame duck are hatched by artificial incubation, as those of the fowl in Egypt.

The tame duck intermingles with a curious species often seen in farm-yards, termed the Muscovy, or more properly the musk duck (*Anas moschata*), of which little or nothing seems to be known. This duck exceeds the ordinary kind in size, and differs greatly in colouring, and the form of the head and body. The male is much larger than the female. The general colour is glossy blue-black, varied more or less with white; the head is crested, and a scarlet fleshy space surrounds the eye, continued from scarlet caruncles or wattles on the beak. The feathers are larger, softer, and more lax than in the ordinary duck, and less adapted for aquatic habits.

Buffon terms this bird Le Canard Musqué, on account of its strong musk-like scent; and Ray says the same thing: "Anglicè, the Muscovy duck, not because it is brought from Muscovy, but because it exhales a somewhat powerful odour of musk." Buffon describes and figures it of a blue-black, with white shoulders, and this figure agrees with Marcgrave's description, who states it to be a native of Brazil and Guiana, and terms it 'Anas sylvestris, magnitudine anseris,' a wood-duck, as large as a goose. According to Buffon, it is the Ypeca-guacu of Pison. In Guiana it is said to tenant the flooded savannahs, and to build its nest upon the trunks of decayed trees. When the young are hatched, the parent is said to take them one after another in her beak and put them on the water. It would appear that they are there liable to destruction from alligators, for flocks of young are seldom seen exceeding five or six, though the eggs are more numerous. Their food in the savannahs consists of the grain of a sort of grass called wild rice. In the morning they visit the immense inundated prairies, and fly towards the sea as the evening comes on, but the hottest hours of the day are passed on the leafy branches of trees. They are fierce and wild, and will not allow themselves to be approached. (See Buffon.) We know nothing respecting the domestication of this bird, nor the precise time of its introduction to Europe. Linnæus, in the 'Fauna Suecica,' says, "In prædiis magnatum culta, nullibi Sueciæ spontanea,"—it is reared on the farms of the gentry, but is not indigenous in Sweden. Buffon says that these birds appeared in France in the time of Belon (about 1540), who calls them "Canes de Guinée." In the time of Ray they were known in England; he terms the species "Anas sylvestris Braziliensis."

Mr. Eyton, in his work on the duck tribe, states that these birds "are supposed to have been originally natives of South America;" but he does not assert this as a positive fact; and it is strange that no wild specimens appear to have been received from that country, as might be expected. The truth is, that considerable obscurity still envelopes the history of this bird. The musk duck has a fierce expression, and is indeed by no means gentle,—being quarrelsome and easily excited to rage, when it depresses its head, and utters deep hoarse notes in the lowest tone. Its flesh is said to be good, as is that of the mixed breed between this and the common kind.

Among the wild water-fowl of our country, the teal (*Querquedula Crecca*) is celebrated for the goodness of its flesh. It is one of the smallest, and at the same time one of the most beautiful of our ducks, and might be easily domesticated, as it bears confinement well, and becomes very familiar. This species is distributed over a great part of Europe, Northern Asia, and America; and multitudes every winter visit the fens of our island. It breeds also with us in the marshes of the northern counties, but not in great numbers. The teal, however, is less abundant in our island in winter than the wigeon (*Mareca Penelope*, Selby). This bird, though it does not breed on our shores, flocks to them during the colder months, and takes up its abode on rivers, fens, and lakes, as well as along the whole circuit of our coast. Vast numbers are annually killed, yet the losses seem to be annually recruited, for we observe no diminution of numbers. During the early part of the winter the flesh of these birds is good; but it is said to become inferior after Christmas, owing to the failure of fresh vegetable food, which necessitates them to devour marine vegetables, and perhaps molluscs and crustacea—at least such is Mr. Selby's opinion. The wigeon appears in our latitudes at the latter part of September, and returns northward to its summer haunts early in March. In their habits they are greatly nocturnal, night being the time in which they seek their food; and their whistling note, as they fly in compact bodies overhead, may be heard by the wanderer along the shore after sunset. From this note the wigeon is often called the Whew-duck. This species is easily domesticated, and has been known to pair with the common duck.

Our plate represents the tame swan; the domestic goose; the musk or Muscovy duck, male; the tame duck, male; the wild duck, male; the wigeon, male and female; and the teal, male.

The Stature and Weight of Man at Different Ages.—M. Quetelet, of Brussels, who lately has published the result of his investigations on this subject, found for 63 male children, and 56 female, newly born, the following quantities:—

	Weight. lbs. avoird.	Stature. Imp. feet.
Male children . . .	7·057536 . .	1·62732
Female . . .	6·4179468 . .	1·58467

The extremes are—

	Boys.	Girls.
Minimum . . .	5·1608232 lbs. .	2·4701367 lbs.
Maximum . . .	9·92466 . .	9·936329

From a table which M. Quetelet has drawn up on the same subject, we find—1st, that at an equality of age the male is generally heavier than the female. 2ndly, That the male attains the maximum weight about the age of forty years, and that he begins to lose weight in a very sensible manner towards his sixtieth year; and that at the age of eighty years he has lost about 13·23288 lbs. avoirdupois, the stature being also diminished 2·75604 inches. 3rdly, That the female attains the maximum weight later than the male—towards the fiftieth year. 4thly, That when the male and female have assumed their complete development, they weigh almost exactly twenty times as much as at the moment of their birth, while their stature is only three and a quarter times what it was at the same period. Children lose weight during the first three days after their birth; at the age of a week they begin sensibly to increase; after one year they have tripled their weight; then they require six years to double the weight of one year, and thirteen to quadruple it. The inferior parts of the body are developed more than the superior. In a child the head is equal to a fifth part, and in a full-grown man to an eighth of the whole height of the individual. The mean stature is a little more among persons in easy circumstances than among the indigent population.—*Jamieson's Philosophical Journal.*

Gratuitous Exhibitions.—In accordance with the suggestions of a parliamentary committee, the dean and chapter of Durham have thrown the cathedral (with the exception of the Chapel of Nine Altars) open to the public, for the purpose of enabling them to view the building, monuments, &c.

[Workhouse of the Windsor Union.]

TWO HOURS AT A UNION WORKHOUSE.

The name which some persons have attempted to fix upon the Workhouses of the Unions formed under the New Poor-Law is *Bastile*. The Bastile, as our readers know, was the state prison of Paris. It consisted of eight towers, united by masonry of great thickness. This building was surrounded with a fosse, or ditch, one hundred and twenty feet wide, and twenty-five feet deep; and beyond the ditch was a stone wall, thirty-six feet high. The eight towers contained several stories of octagonal rooms, each having a loopholed window, unglazed, pierced through a wall six feet thick. There was no chimney or fireplace in the rooms; and the only furniture was an iron grating, raised about six inches above the floor, on which the mattress of the prisoner was placed; and on this grating he slept by night and sat by day. The Union Bastiles are somewhat differently constructed. The engraving at the head of this paper is an accurate representation of the Workhouse erected for the Windsor Union. It is situated in the parish of Old Windsor, on the verge of the Great Park, at a spot known as Bear's Rails. The road which passes it leads to Bishopgate and Englefield Green, where the stranger finds himself amongst the beautiful scenery with which the neighbourhood of Windsor abounds, particularly in this locality, which is the scene of Denham's celebrated poem of 'Cooper's Hill.' The Union Workhouse harmonizes with the cheerful peeps over the valley of the Thames, and the massive and venerable trees which form the charm of these woodland solitudes. It is built in the style of two centuries and a half ago, when comfort and elegance, the growth of security, had displaced the rude fortress-mansions of the feudal lords. The area which surrounds it is separated from the public road only by light palings. The court before the central building is bright with flowers and green turf; and the well-directed industry of the inmates is rapidly converting two large plots of waste land, above and below the building, into profitable kitchen-gardens. But let us enter.

At the central door we are met by a porter, who communicates to the master of the workhouse our wish to see the building. We are shown into a neat room (that on the right of the door); the opposite room is the master's office. The inmates have recently dined. We taste the food which has constituted their meal; and we acknowledge that the suet pudding, the bread, and the cheese are, in quality, equal to what may be found in the larders of the wealthiest. But then, the quantity? How many poor children get up hungry from this scanty meal? How many aged persons want some comforts besides soup, and gruel, and pudding, and boiled beef? We have been taught, very industriously, to think that there is a pinching dietary in these workhouses; and though the food is unquestionably good, is there enough of it? Such thoughts must cross the mind of the stranger who has heard of anti-poor-law orators and writers. The sight of this building has dispelled some of his prejudices; and he can no longer begin his apostrophe to the miseries of a Union Workhouse with Eloise's lamentation,

"Relentless walls! whose *darksome* round contains,"

&c. &c. But there may still be a great deal of misery though the rooms are cheerful, light, airy, clean even to a Dutch housewife's cleanliness. Let us proceed. The men's dining-rooms on the left of the centre are empty. We go onward to their sitting-rooms, which communicate with yards or courts, in front and behind. The men are separated into two classes—the able-bodied, and the aged and infirm; and each have their allotted stations. The old and infirm are quietly sitting after their meal,—some in the bright sunshine, some in their ward. A few are reading. The able bodied (at this season a small number) have gone to their allotted work, either in the garden, or in picking oakum, or in cleaving wood, or, if they practise any trade of general utility, such as that of the tailor or shoemaker, in labouring for the common benefit. The boys are with the schoolmaster. We see here a healthy set of lads, well clothed, perfectly clean, with smiling and assured faces, learning to read, to write, to cipher, under the direction of an intelligent young man, who looks, in the performance of his duty, as active and cheerful as the boys themselves. We proceed up

stairs to the sleeping-rooms. The whole upper range of the building, which is about three hundred and sixty feet long, is a series of rooms, accessible by several staircases, but communicating, in their entire length, with the master's and matron's apartments in the centre. These rooms, as the lower rooms, are subdivided into the bed-rooms of the able-bodied men, the aged, the infirm, and the boys. On the opposite side of the central building are the sleeping-rooms of the aged and infirm women, the able-bodied, and the girls. Throughout the entire range each has a separate bed; and in looking at these beds (and we were invited to a careful examination of them), it is impossible to doubt that the most vigilant cleanliness presides over the establishment. The ventilation of these sleeping-rooms is perfect. Upon descending into the ground-floor on the right of the centre, we are in the female day-apartments. These are upon the same plan as those of the males. The old women who are not infirm are comfortably seated at their knitting and sewing; some are reading the Book of Life,—that best consolation under every condition; some are walking in their sunny court, and perhaps the thought of their *tea* (for they have tea) is a pleasant anticipation. The girls are with the schoolmistress. They are learning to knit, to sew, to read, and to write. All can *now* write. A year ago, when the Union was first opened, scarcely any could write. An intelligent girl or boy, who desires to know something more than is to be found in the school-books, may have a book out of the library, and so may the adults.

We have seen nothing yet of actual misery; we have scarcely observed a face in which there is a lurking discontent. The food, though not luxurious or improvidently distributed, must be abundant; for we have beheld nothing but health. We know that health is dependent upon cleanliness, ventilation, and sufficient food. Here are undoubtedly cleanliness and ventilation; and the food must be ample for the purposes of health, or there would be sickness. But there is an infirmary to be seen. Here, indeed, there is some wretchedness, but it is that suffering which we find in the wards of a well-conducted hospital. The sufferer has come here for relief. Here is the paralytic, whose continued abiding amongst us must be rendered as little burdensome as may be; here is the cripple, who is incapable of labour or of exercise, and his pains must be soothed under the eye of surgical skill; here is one who lost the use of his limbs in the last hard winter, and he is fast recovering his strength and his ability to work. The patients tell us that every comfort which they require is within their reach; that every nourishment or even indulgence which they want is instantly given, upon the order of the medical officer. We are satisfied that the sick are well cared for. The kitchen, the laundry, and the chapel complete the inspection of the building.

Is the Workhouse of a Union, then, in which the physical condition of the poor is so much better looked after than in their own dwellings, a place which the poor will desire to pass their days in? Assuredly not. If it were so, it would be a greater curse to the community than the filth, the ignorance, the vice, the suffering of the old parochial workhouses, where the only thing which the parish officers required was that the poor should be fed. To the able-bodied the most comfortable Union Workhouse must be an irksome place. Its strict classification, its regulated supply of food, its unvarying uniformity of discipline, its enforcement of labour, its seclusion from the rest of the world, must offer restraints which few would encounter who have the means of earning their own living. The dirty vagabond who occasionally demands the shelter and food which are offered to all, even to the non-parochial wayfarer, likes not the cleanliness and order which must accompany the satisfaction of his physical necessities. He abides not here. But to the worn-out solitary man, and the sick,—the orphan, and widow, the Union Workhouse must be an incalculable blessing. The education of the children of these *Bastiles* will raise the standard of intellect and morals in the whole community. Such workhouses as we have thus hastily noticed must realize the true object of such institutions —"not to repel the really destitute, nor to attract those who have any other lawful means of procuring subsistence."

THE ISLANDS OF ENGLAND.

UNDER this head it is intended to include only the *islands* and *islets*, great and small, situated in the seas and channels within the southern division of Great Britain, or England. The numerous islands belonging to the northern section of Great Britain, or Scotland, would require a separate article.

Beginning, therefore, on the western side of England, and in the waters that lie to the south of Scotland, and called the Irish Sea, the ISLE OF MAN is the first that presents itself, and which is the largest of the islands of England (with the exception, perhaps, of Anglesea, or Anglesey), and the most remarkable for its historical facts and relations. Its extreme length is about thirty miles, with an irregular breadth, varying from six to twelve or thirteen; its length extending in a northerly and southerly direction, with the northern part inclining towards the east. Its position is due west from the southern part of Cumberland and the northern extremity of Lancashire, the distance from the island to the nearest part of the English coast being from thirty to thirty-five miles. It is also about the like distance from Galloway, in the south of Scotland; and the same from Anglesea, in North Wales. From Ireland the distance is somewhat greater, being more than forty miles from the nearest point of the Irish coast. It is stated by some of the old historians that the Irish on one occasion put in a claim for this island, on the plea that it lay as near to their country as it did to either of the other rival nations, England and Scotland; when a rather singular mode of settling the dispute was had recourse to—not that of measuring the distance, as would have been the case now-a-days—but by introducing venomous reptiles into the island; and as they were found to thrive and propagate their species, the Irish people were satisfied to forego their claim, believing it to lie beyond the limits of the influence of their country's patron and guardian, St. Patrick.

The earliest mention made of this island is found in Cæsar's 'Commentaries,' where it is called Mona, which name has also been applied to the island of Anglesea by some of the ancient writers. About the close of the first century, when the ancient Druids were expelled from North Wales, they took shelter in the northern part of this island, and soon found means to bring the inhabitants under a mild form of government which they instituted along with their superstitions and religious ceremonies. In the fifth century the Scots transported themselves thither, and for a considerable period afterwards the princes of the island appear to have been of the same line as the kings of Scotland. It was afterwards ravaged by Edwin, king of Northumberland, when there sprang up a second race of princes, said to be descended from Orri, the son of the king of Norway.

Subsequently the princes or governors of the Isle of Man were called kings; and a line of these is said to have sprung from Goddard Crownan, son of Harold the Black, of Iceland, who took shelter here after Harold had defeated the Norwegians at Stamford. But these kings were feudatories, in some degree, to the kings

of England. But Alexander III. of Scotland, who had conquered the isles, seized this also; when it afterwards came into the hands of Edward I., who directed the warden to restore it to John Baliol, who had previously done homage to him for the kingdom of Scotland. It afterwards was claimed in descent, and finally was adjudged by parliament, in the 7th of Edward III., to William de Montacute, and conveyed to him by letters-patent in the same year. It afterwards, by sale or forfeiture, changed hands several times, and was held by the Stanley family, of which the Earls of Derby became the head, till the reign of Elizabeth; and it finally came into the possession of the Duke of Athol. It was purchased of the Athol family by government, in 1764, for 70,000*l.*; but in 1792, on its being made apparent that it had been disposed of beneath its real value, an additional compensation of 3000*l.* per annum was granted by the crown to the duke's family for ever. The manorial rights, and certain privileges and immunities, still continue in the Athol family.

The inhabitants of this island are still on a different footing from the rest of the subjects of Great Britain and her islands (except the Channel Islands); for instead of being represented in the British parliament, they have a governor and council who superintend public affairs, and twenty-four persons who form what is called a *House of Keys*, who were originally the representatives of the people, but at present a permanent and self-constituted body. These, together with two officials called *deemsters*—the judges of the north and south districts respectively, who decide causes as they *deem* conscientiously right—form what is called the *Tinwald* Court, so named from the Islandic *ting*, an assembly, and *wald*, a fence. This court meets annually in the open air, on Tinwald Hill, three miles from Peel, on the road to Douglas. It is at the meetings of this court that all new laws, or Acts of Tinwald, are promulgated.

The deemsters are judges both in civil and criminal cases; and, until lately, barristers and attorneys were wholly unknown, every one pleading his own cause. The civil divisions of the island consist of six *sheadings*, each having an *anne*, or coroner, whose duties are similar to those of sheriffs; besides which there are as many *moats* and *captains* as there are parishes, the former superintending the revenue, while the latter act as captains of militia. The ecclesiastical divisions extend to seventeen parishes.

Viewed from a distance, the general aspect is tame and uninviting; for the mountains, which extend nearly through the entire length of this island, although of a considerable altitude, neither tower up with sufficient abruptness nor assume picturesque forms. The highest point of the range is Snowfield, which is nearly two thousand feet above the sea; and the extremities of this range, the Barrules, are scarcely a couple of hundred feet lower. Under Snowfield, Barrule, and Carrahan, three mighty kings of the island are said to lie buried, who gave their names to these mountains; and so vain and superstitious are the natives, that they still are willing to believe that these huge natural piles are artificial barrows raised in honour of their memories.

This range of mountains and hills occupies a considerable portion of the superficial area of the island, and no doubt affects the climate unfavourably. However, from their sides and bases issue many springs and rivulets which afford a supply of fresh water in every part of the island. Some of the larger streams are stocked with trout and other species of fresh-water fish. The names of the principal are the Neb at Peel, the Colby near Ramsey, and the Black and Grey Waters near Douglas. The valleys are some of them tolerably fertile in grass and pasture; and where the land is tolerably level, grain is frequently cultivated. The northern district of the island is not so fertile as the southern; but there is more timber there, for the soil is of a sandy character, and consequently suited to the growth of the fir-tree. On some of the uplands there is an abundance of peat-soil, which the inhabitants dig for fuel; and it is no unusual thing to discover beneath two or three feet of this peat, larger trees, both fir and oak, than are now growing in the island.

Lead, copper, and iron are among the mineral productions; besides which there is no scarcity of stone of several sorts, including limestone and blue roofing-slate; marl is likewise met with. The cattle of the island are small, chiefly of the Kyloe or Galloway breeds, and the sheep which are pastured upon the hills are of the small coarse-woolled breed, with black or grey faces. The horses are small, but they are remarkably hardy; and there is a breed of small swine in the island, much esteemed for the excellence of their flesh.

The area of the whole island has been estimated at 140,000 acres; with a population exceeding 30,000. The language spoken by the natives is called Manks, or Manx, being a dialect of the Erse; but, from the influx of strangers, it is now dashed with English and other tongues. The people too are called Manx, but they are evidently of a very mixed origin. Many of them engage in the herring fishery, which commences in July and lasts till Allhallows, and 20,000 barrels have been cured and exported in a season, employing 500 boats of two tons burthen each.

Though the bishop takes the title of Sodor and Man, the Hebrides, which formerly were called Sodor (or at least one of the principal of them was so named), have no longer any connection with Man; but the name (Sodor) has been applied in modern times to a small island within musket-shot of the main one, which was called by the Norwegians Holm, and upon which the cathedral is situated; but the bishop's residence is in the parish of Kirk Michael. The capital, if it may be so called, is Castle Town, or Rushin, at the head of a bay on the south of the island. The castle is a building of considerable extent, and is the residence of the governor, and is stated to have been built by Gutterd, king of Man, A.D. 960, who was interred within its walls. Derby Haven, the most secure harbour in the island, lies about a mile from Castle Town.

Douglas, on the east coast, although by no means so well built as Rushin, is the chief emporium of trade. Mona Castle, in the neighbourhood of this town, is a seat of the Duke of Athol.

Peel, on the west, is protected by a castle situated upon the rocky island referred to as the site of the cathedral. Ramsey lies on the north of the island, at the head of a spacious bay, and has a harbour secure from every wind but a north-easterly one.

Balla Salla was once distinguished by Rushin Abbey, the burial-place of the kings of Mona, but at present few vestiges of its former grandeur are remaining.

Since the introduction of steam-boats, the Isle of Man has emerged, as it were, from a state of comparative obscurity, and thousands of persons have visited this place who never would have seen it but for the facilities which steam-power has afforded. There is scarcely a day now upon which several steamers do not touch at one or the other ports of this island, for as it lies not far out of the direct route from Liverpool to the south and west of Scotland, as well as the north of Ireland, where great expedition is not a material object the boats commonly touch at this island. Besides these there are several coasting steam-vessels which ply from Port Carlisle, Whitehaven, Lancaster, and other places, which either make occasional excursions to the Isle of Man, or take it in their regular routes as one of the

places to call at; so that its intercourse with the three neighbouring kingdoms is now frequent and regularly established. It is not, however, a place of fashionable resort; for its climate is by no means in its favour, vast quantities of rain falling for seven or eight months of the year, and occasionally it is visited with a long continuance of cold easterly winds; while the society of the island, although much improved from what it was formerly, still continues a sort of city of refuge for decayed debtors and outlawed individuals, who find protection here from the laws of the United Kingdom.

Neither of the Acts of parliament which transferred the island from the Athol family to the crown interferes with private laws and immunities, except as regards the excise and revenue laws, and hence it is that it still continues an asylum for persons of a certain order and character.

WALNEY ISLAND.

Directly eastward from the Isle of Man, though at the distance of more than thirty miles, lies the island of Walney. It is situated on the north of the entrance into Morecambe Bay, and is separated from the mainland by a narrow strait fordable at low-water. The length of this island is nearly ten miles, but it is very narrow, in some places less than half a mile, and rarely extending to a mile. Its soil is sandy, and it lies so low, and so completely exposed to the winds blowing in from the Irish Sea, that the waves sometimes threaten to roll directly over it; and instances are on record of the sea rushing across it in one or two places.

The district of country to which it lies contiguous is that detached portion of Lancashire called Lonsdale north of the Sands; but this particular part of it is known by the name of Low Furness, and is a very fine agricultural district. The island of Walney is, however, comparatively barren; for notwithstanding some of the inhabitants raise more or less grain, the ground generally is mown or pastured, and large numbers of rabbits do not add to its fertility.

On the island are three or four small villages or hamlets, with here and there a small cottage-farmer. A small chapel for the convenience of the inhabitants stands nearly in the middle of the island. The south end of the island, which lies at a greater distance from the mainland, curves inward, something in the shape of the head of a bent walking-cane, and within this curve a harbour is formed where coasting vessels often resort for shelter and safety. Between this part of Walney and the mainland are two or three smaller islands, the largest of which (about a mile long) is called Old Barrow; while another, named Foulney, is somewhat smaller, but, as its name implies, is the resort of vast numbers of wild-fowl. Indeed, all these islands are frequented by large numbers of sea-fowl, particularly gulls of two or three varieties; and the only remarkable object they present at a distance are the old walls of Peel Castle, or, as it is commonly called, the Pile of Fouldry. The building has been based upon an irregular rock, but at present the ruinous walls rise to no great height, although the Pile, or 'The Peel' (as it is called), may be seen from the vicinity of Lancaster on the opposite side of Morecambe Bay, and it serves as a signal-tower by which mariners are guided in this intricate and dangerous channel.

ISLAND OF ANGLESEA, OR ANGLESEY.

This is one of the islands of the Irish Sea, and is the largest of the islands belonging to England. It is one of the six counties of North Wales, being situated at the north-western extremity of that principality. A long and narrow channel separates it from the mainland. By some of the old Roman authors it was named Mona: but the ancient Britons gave it the name of Ynys Dowyll, or Shady Island; the name, no doubt, being derived from the groves and woods with which it once abounded.

The shape of this island is an irregular triangle, indented throughout with bays and creeks. From north-west to south-east its length is twenty miles; and its breadth from north-east to south-west is about sixteen miles, with a superficial area of about two hundred thousand acres. It contains two market-towns, Beaumaris and Holyhead; and although the former is the county town, the latter is far more populous. It is divided into six hundreds, which contain seventy-seven parishes. The population of the whole island does not fall far short of forty thousand. In the island are no streams of any importance to navigation, although it is generally well watered by numerous small brooks and rivulets. The strait which separates it from the mainland in breadth scarcely exceeds a good-sized river, but it serves the purposes of navigation to small vessels connected with the trade of neighbouring seaports. The bridge of Menai, which has been thrown across this strait, is one of the greatest monuments of art connected with modern times; for while it in noway interrupts the navigation of the channel, it forms an easy and safe communication with the mainland, which had long been much needed.

The climate of Anglesea is considerably milder than the adjacent counties of North Wales; but owing to the prevalence of the autumnal fogs, the inhabitants are subject to attacks of agues. Excepting the district of country bordering on the strait, which is still interspersed more or less with woods, the country on the whole presents a naked and uninviting appearance, though in the time of the Druids most of it produced abundance of timber-trees, among which were the "shady oaks" with which the island is said to have once abounded; and among which were erected those rude temples where they practised their peculiar religious rites and ceremonies, until they were eventually driven to seek refuge in the Isle of Man. Though much of the ground presents an uneven surface, there are no hills of much note or of considerable elevation; nothing to be compared with the mountains of the neighbouring counties of Wales.

The soil for the most part is tolerably productive; but farming until within a very recent period made but little progress towards those vast improvements which have been effected in other parts of the country; and even yet the agricultural condition of Anglesea is much behind that of many parts of the country which cannot boast of so good a soil. The greater portion of it is a sandy loam, and the corn produced consists of wheat, oats, and barley, of which a considerable quantity is annually exported to the mainland. The cattle raised here are yearly sent to the English markets in considerable numbers; for although a great number of sheep are kept upon some of the poorer lands of this island, the value of the cattle exported greatly exceeds that of sheep, for it is not from this part of the principality that the noted Welsh mutton is derived. Neither game nor fish (fresh-water) is very plentiful, but the sea yields a good supply of most kinds of fish common to our coasts; and Anglesea is reckoned a cheap place for provisions generally.

The mineral productions of the island are various, and some of them of a valuable nature. There are some marble-quarries that have been worked with success, as well as others which yield breccia for millstones. But the most valuable production of the island is its copper, of which large quantities have at times been raised, some in a native state, but most generally in veins mixed with sundry other matters. Lead too is among the mineral products; and coal, though not of the best quality, is found within the limits of the island.

(To be continued.)